

*Salignac de la Mothe Fenelon* 6  
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# K DIRECTIONS

FOR A

*HOLY LIFE,*

AND

THE ATTAINING

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

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BY THE

ARCHBISHOP OF CAMBRAY.

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Recommended to the serious Perusal of the Lovers of Truth, and  
Professors of the Christian Name, of every Denomination.

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## PREFACE.

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THE Reader may be assured, that the following Directions were drawn up by the late Archbishop of CAMBRAY, who was tutor to the present French King's father.

Some noblemen and ladies belonging to the court, endeavoured to recommend the practice of them, by their own examples; which gave so great umbrage, that a rumour was spread abroad of a rising Heresy, much in credit at court, which they called Quietism, a modern nickname for old Christianity.

Tertullian, in his Apology for the Christians, speaking to the Roman proconsuls and judges, says,\* “ You look upon a Christian as the sum total of iniquity, a despiser of the gods, emperor, laws, morality, and, in one word, an enemy of human nature.—You cannot but see that our Name is the greatest crime in our indictments; in the persecution of which Name, men vie in hatred, and are ambitious to excel each other in malice.” Now if the primitive Christians met with such treatment from the world, need any wonder to see those who endeavour to tread in their steps, and live as they did, meet with the like?

“ When

\* REEVES'S Apologies, Vol. I.

“What an unaccountable thing is it,” says the same Apologist, “for so many men to blindfold themselves on purpose to fall foul upon Christianity! and to such a degree, that they cannot talk about the noted probity of any Christian, without allaying his character with a dash of his religion. Caius Sejus (says one) is a very good man, but he is a Christian. I wonder (says another) that Lucius the Philosopher is all of a sudden turned Christian: and none has sense enough, in his passion, to put the question right, and argue in this manner: Is not Caius so good, and Lucius so wise, merely from the influence of their religion? Or was it not the probity of the one, and the wisdom of the other, that prepared the way, and brought them over to be Christians?” How applicable this was to the Duke of Beauvilliers, and the Duke of Chevreuse, is best known to those who were perfectly well acquainted with their characters, and what the world said of their religion, after they had embraced the tenets of the Archbishop of CAMBRAY.

The author of a book entitled, *Annals of the Court, and of Paris, for the Years 1697 and 1698*, when the affair of Quietism was warmly debated, says,\* “All the friends of L’Abbe Fenelon were the friends of Madam Guion. The Duke of Beauvilliers, who was governor to the children of France, was suspected of giving into her errors, with the Duke of Chevreuse.”

\* *Annales de la Cour, & de Paris, pour les Annees 1697 & 1698.*

“Chevreuse and their families. The whole  
 “house of Charost was also suspected of giv-  
 “ing into those new opinions; but that which  
 “hindered scrupulous minds from condemning  
 “them was, that there were no people, neither  
 “in the court, nor in all France, whose mo-  
 “rals were more regular, or whose lives were  
 “more Christian-like, than theirs.”

In another place, telling how the Archbishop  
 of CAMBRAY, and his nephew, sub-preceptor  
 to the Duke of Burgundy, were put out of their  
 places in Court; he says, “It must be confessed,  
 “they who were put out, were persons of exem-  
 “plary piety, and were we to look through all  
 “France, it would be impossible to find any  
 “who lived more like Christians.” What  
 noble confessions do we see here, drawn by the  
 force of truth, from the pen of a writer, who,  
 in the very same pages, stigmatizes their opi-  
 nions with Heresy and Quietism!

Thus, as Tertullian said of some in his days,  
 “They praise what they know, but vilify what  
 “they know not; they blot the fairest examples  
 “of virtue shining in their eyes, because of a  
 “religion they are entirely in the dark about.”

It is a fact too notorious in the world, though  
 not so much to be admired at, as lamented,  
 when persons, eminently qualified to reform  
 mankind, have attempted a reformation, they  
 have been sure to have some invidious character  
 fastened either upon themselves, or their doctrines,  
 to hinder people from benefiting by them: but  
 if the Directions of the Archbishop of CAMBRAY,



we here present the Reader with, are capable, when put in practice, to form the most regular lives and morals, even in persons of the highest rank, need we say any thing more to recommend them, but only wish that all who read them, would try and make the experiment for themselves?

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# DIRECTIONS

FOR A

## HOLY LIFE.

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I. **T**HE principal instrument, or means of our perfection, is contained in this one expression of God to Abraham, "Walk in my Presence, and be thou perfect.\*"

II. The Presence of God calms the mind, gives sweet repose and quiet, even in the midst of our daily labours; but then we must be resigned to Him without any reserve.

III. When we have found God, there is nothing worth looking for in men: we must then give up our best friends, for the good Friend is in the heart, the Spouse who is jealous, and will have every thing else put out.

IV. It does not require a great deal of time to love God, to draw near and enjoy his Presence, to lift up our heart to Him, or to adore Him at the bottom of our heart, or to make Him an offering of what we do and suffer; for the very "kingdom of God is within us,†" which nothing can molest.

V. When the hurry and distraction of the senses, and the roving of the imagination, hinder us from getting into a quiet and composed frame of mind, let us at least calm ourselves by the integrity

\* Genesis xvii. 1. The words of the text are, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect:" but the Author's words in French are, "*Marchez en ma Presence & vous serez parfait*; Walk in my Presence, and you shall be perfect."

† Luke xvii. 21.

tegrity of our will, and the very desire of a composure does in a manner prove a sufficient one. We must also turn our minds inward to God, and do whatsoever He would have us, with a pure and upright intention.

VI. We must endeavour from time to time to excite in us a desire to be devoted and resigned to God, with all the powers and faculties of the soul; that is to say, to contemplate Him with our mind, and with our will to love Him: let us also desire that our senses may be consecrated to Him in all their operations.

VII. Let us take care we be not occupied too long, either outwardly or inwardly, about unprofitable things, which create such distractions both of heart and mind, and draw them so much out of themselves, that it is with difficulty they can be brought again to be inward enough to find God.

VIII. As soon as we feel that some foreign object gives us pleasure and joy, let us withdraw our heart from it; and that the heart may not take up its rest in it, let us presently shew it its true object and sovereign good, that is, God himself. If we are but faithful in ever so small a degree, to wean ourselves inwardly from the creatures, so as to hinder them from resting in the heart, which God has reserved to Himself, there to be honoured, adored, and loved, we shall quickly taste that pure joy, which God never fails to give a soul that is free and disengaged from all worldly affections.

IX. When we perceive in ourselves a strong and very eager desire after any thing whatsoever, and find that our humour and inclination carries us too precipitately to do any thing, be it only to say something, to see an object, or go any  
where



where, let us strive to moderate ourselves, and request of God that He would stay the precipitation of our thoughts, and the commotion we are under, because He has said that His Spirit abides not in hurry and commotion.

X. Let us take great care we do not concern and busy ourselves too much with what others say and do, and that we let it not too much into our minds, for it is a great cause and source of disturbance.

XI. As soon as we perceive what it is God requires of us, in any particular that presents itself, let us stick to that, and withdraw ourselves from every thing else: by that means we shall always preserve a freedom and evenness of soul, and shall cut off a great many needless things, which incumber the mind, and hinder it from turning easily to God.

XII. An excellent means of keeping ourselves in an inward quiet and freedom of spirit, is at the finishing of every action to bound there all reflections arising from it, the respects and regards of self-love, sometimes from vain joy, and sometimes from grief, because this is one of our greatest evils. Happy is the man who retains nothing in his mind but what is necessary, and who only thinks of each thing just when it is the time to think of it; so that it is rather God who excites the perception and idea of it, by an impression and discovery of His will, which we must perform, than the mind's being at the trouble to forecast and find it.

XIII. Let us accustom ourselves to have our minds inwardly recollected in the day-time, and during the course of our employments, by looking singly to God: by that let us still all the  
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commotions of our heart, as soon as we perceive it disturbed and moved. Let us forsake all pleasures which come not from God, put away all vain thoughts and wild imaginations, and speak no idle word. Let us seek God within us, and we shall infallibly find Him, and with Him joy and peace.

XIV. In our outward occupations, let us be occupied more with God than all the rest. To do them well, we must do them as in His presence, and for His sake. At the sight of God's Majesty, a calmness and serenity should possess our soul. One word of our Saviours, in time past, instantly calmed a boisterous and raging sea; and now one look of His towards us, and of ours towards Him, should every day do the like.

XV. We must often lift up our heart to God; He will purify, enlighten, and direct it. It was the daily practice of the holy prophet David: "I have set," says he, "the Lord always before me.\*" Let us also frequently repeat to ourselves these beautiful expressions of the same prophet: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.†"

XVI. We need not stay for leisure hours to shut the door and retire, for the moment in which we regret the want of retirement, is enough to bring us into it. We must turn our hearts towards God in a simple and familiar manner, and with great assurance. The most broken minutes are good at all times, even when at meals

\* Psal. xvi. 8.

† Psal. lxxiii. 25, 26.

meals, and when others are speaking. Unprofitable and tedious long stories and relations, instead of tiring may relieve us, by affording some interval of inward retirement. Thus all things turn to good to those who love God.

XVII. We should often read such books as are fitting and proper for our state and condition, and in reading frequently stop and make a pause, to give place to the Spirit, that inwardly draws the mind. Two or three plain or simple words, but full of the Spirit of God, are the hidden manna; and though we forget the words, yet they operate secretly, and the soul is fed and nourished by them.

XVIII. We must endeavour to have a continual correspondence and fellowship with God. Let us be persuaded that the most profitable and desirable state in this life is that of Christian perfection, which consists in the union of the soul with God; an union that includes in it all spiritual good; a familiarity with God so great, that no two friends upon earth converse oftener together, nor with greater endearment, freedom, ease and openness of heart; a wonderful liberty of spirit, that raises us above all events and changes in life, and that frees us from the tyranny of human respect; an extraordinary power for the well performing all our actions, and acquitting ourselves well in our employments; a prudence truly Christian in all our undertakings; a peace and perfect tranquillity in all conditions; and, in short, a continual victory over self-love and our passions.

XIX. This is the happy state to which we are called; we, whom God hath separated from the corruptions of this world. If we do not partake

partake of these heavenly blessings, it is our own fault, since the Spirit of God disposes and excites us continually to aspire after them: but we resist Him often, either by open repugnance or secret refusal, or for want of resolution and courage, or letting ourselves be deceived willingly, by the pretexts and artifices of self-love, that begets in us abundance of mean indulgences and wrong managements. Let us no more be seduced thereto, but, as saith the Apostle, "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.\*"

\* Eph. v. 15, 16.



**FINIS.**